

x/xx/xxxx

2:23am - West River Tribe

*I've been camping out in Miss Makena's home for the past few weeks. She has been kind enough to let me stay, as long as I continue to help with the chores and errands around the farm. It's really hot here, even with the tribe located next to the river, I keep thinking I'm going to pass out from the heat, but I can't give up just yet. I've tracked down Eito to a neighboring tribe. This is the closest I've been to finding him. He's alluded me for the past few months now, but I'm certain I'll be able to catch him off guard this time. I think he's here for another job, but I won't let him finish it. I won't let him finish another job ever again. I won't let him hurt anymore people. I*

The ink to Kian's pen ran dry, much to the boy's dismay. With a subtle groan of annoyance, he stuck his pen into a nearby bag and closed his journal. The quiet night was accompanied by a bright full moon, hanging above the hut Kian was granted permission to sleep in. Despite it being night, the heat was still unbearable. Sweat beaded off Kian's forehead and onto the dirt floor, drying the moment it landed. He wore a simple woven tunic and shoes given to him by Miss Makena. He had met her a little bit ago in the beginning of the summer. She was plowing her farmland with the help of her cows when she suddenly collapsed in the field. Kian happened to be passing by, looking for his target when he noticed the older woman. He didn't hesitate to help her back into her home and find the local healer in the tribe. Like all the other locals however, they didn't trust Kian or treat him too kindly at first. They had every right to be suspicious—A mysterious young boy with an appearance too otherworldly to their own was going to be an eyesore. Especially since Kian's Oromo was still rough around the edges. Despite his awkward tongue, he managed to tell the rest of the tribe of Miss Makena's ailment. She was given treatment and told to stay off her feet for a while.

Kian took it upon himself to offer help to the older woman. She was living on her own and working as hard as she was, Kian didn't want to leave her alone if she needed time to rest. Not only was it the right thing to offer, but Kian also needed a place to stay. He had been a vagrant in this country for the past month, sleeping where he could without getting in trouble. This way, he could be of use and have a decent home at night. Would it hinder his ability to find Eito? Perhaps a bit, but after doing his daily chores, he was free to do what he wanted, so it wasn't so bad. In fact, it was just the lucky strike Kian needed, as he found concrete information on Eito. Eito, a young man in his 20s, was Kian's current target. Kian had long known of Eito, as originally, his target was Eito's mother. Eito's family was cursed. Cursed with the power of disintegration. It wouldn't be potent until the age of eight, but then it would slowly get more and more deadly as the years went on, eventually killing the user around the age of 45. Eito was already a little over half of that, yet continued to use his powers for the will of evil. Not only was Eito's family cursed, but they also worked for a higher power, a clan of assassins. Kian's original goal was to stop Eito's mother, as she was the first one Kian had learned of when he discovered the family line's power, but by the time he had tracked her down, she had already given birth to Eito.

With Eito being the next heir, he was kept under tight watch and his family made sure to keep the boy hidden from the world until he was ready to continue their legacy. Kian was frustrated with himself. If he had just gotten to Eito when he was younger, if he had just taken Eito's curse from him before he was brainwashed into being a killer, then maybe, just maybe, he would have been able to save Eito from so much harm and suffering.

It ate at Kian constantly. It wasn't just Eito, either. All of the powers he could feel circling in his blood, just like the flies that circled above him as he laid down on a wooden bed, irritated Kian. Each and every individual power he had in his arsenal, never truly was his own. Some were gifts, others were taken as curses. There were those that asked him, begged him to take their powers, so a part of them could live on forever in him. While others had to fight him tear for tear to try and keep their curse with them. He never understood why someone would choose to live on with such burdens, but Kian didn't understand many things. There were the few who he had accidentally taken, and the consequences to those weighed the heaviest.

Eito was just in the long line of people who weren't blessed with a happy life, but could have one if Kian was allowed to help. It was his job, his *mission*, to make sure curses were relieved from people. After everything he had learned about himself with the time he had, Kian knew what his purpose was, and what he had to do.

Kian's nightly routine consisted of writing a journal entry before bed, curling up on his mat, and holding his bag of belongings to his chest. Whatever was left of Kian's past life was all squished into a one by one satchel. His princely attire, another formal piece, a few hygiene products (not that he needed them much anymore), and some of the only items he held dear to him. Before falling asleep, Kian pulled out a small worn photo from his bag. It was *extremely* worn, faded in the corners and with blotches of tear stains. There were some tears and even a corner where it seemed to have burned. Regardless of its current state, Kian was still able to make out the faces on the photo. His mom, Aeva Ravina, and his mother, Opal von Valois sat on their thrones in the center, while his sisters and him all stood on either side of them. His uncle, Persis Lancaster, stood behind the thrones in the center. All of them smiled into the camera, a point in time where Kian could remember being happy. He couldn't exactly remember how old he was in the photo anymore, but judging by how he looked, Kian assumed he couldn't have been any older than ten.

There was an invisible force that squeezed his chest everytime he looked at it, but Kian routinely looked over the photo. He didn't want to forget. His greatest fear was forgetting what he was fighting for, what he was doing *all* of this for. With a tender hold, Kian folded the photo up and placed it back into his bag, returning to cuddling the bag for comfort.

Just as Kian was about to call it a night, something in his blood began to boil. He recognized this sensation, but there was something else happening at the same time. The subtle, yet extremely loud voices suddenly in his head made him alert, but he couldn't move. His whole body was going into overdrive, trying to figure out what was going on. Whenever Kian sensed danger, his powers would lose even more control of what little he had. It was almost painful,

how many sensations were happening all at once in his body. The numbness spread and as Kian's eyes forcibly closed, he could feel something opening up and dragging him down. Down and down through an empty space...